

The Simple Truth Series # 8

Our Personal
Ministries



Part 1. **ALLOWING GOD'S GIFTS TO FULFIL
THEIR MINISTRIES.**

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'And expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.' Acts 18:26.

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This study is divided into 3 parts.

Part 1, '**Allowing God's Gifts to Fulfil their Ministries,**' is concerned with Ministries in general, using the five-fold Ministry, of Apostles (Missionaries), Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, as examples.

Part 2, '**The Time of Your Anointing,**' is concerned with when and where your Anointing comes, and why no-one can have a Ministry they are not called to, and Anointed for, which happens too often unfortunately.

Part 3, '**Ministering Your Gift in Love,**' is concerned with *how* to Minister, because anything not done in Love, is done in a wrong spirit.

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Part 1.

ALLOWING GOD'S GIFTS TO FULFIL THEIR MINISTRIES

'And He gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, Pastors; and Teachers; For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.' (Ephesians 4:11-13).

These five Ministries are Ministering gifts, that the Lord has placed in local congregations, for His own service. It's important that we allow these Gifts to fulfil their Ministries, because verse twelve tells us they are given for, 'the perfecting of the Saints.' They are given to bring us to Spiritual maturity, and, even though they are placed in local Churches, they are given for the benefit of the *whole* Body of Christ. They have very different Ministries, but one common objective, and they need to be in their places, playing their part, and they have to trust each other, and work together, to achieve that objective. And none of these Ministries have all the answers. The Apostle is not perfected without the Teacher, and the Prophet is not perfected without the Pastor, etc.

The reason why each one has the particular Ministry they have, is because their temperament is perfect for that Ministry to flourish in. Temperament means, the personal make-up of an individual that causes them to think, feel, and act, the way they do. As an example, our Prophet friend has to be very patient to 'wait on the Lord.' But our Evangelist friend is the opposite, he's the hyperactive child of the Christian family. He sweeps into town, whacks sin with a sledgehammer, then sweeps out again. He's a go-go-go type of person.

Our five friends are going to fly to Australia, and meet up in Sydney to hire a Campervan; then they will drive across Australia together to Perth. And we will find on that road-trip, that each one will naturally take the part that suits their temperament. By that I mean, that one will be the driver, one will be the navigator, etc. I am going to make generalizations about these ministries, and like all generalizations, some people will fit them perfectly, there will be exceptions to the rule, and every shade of partial fitting in between. I also have to acknowledge that none of this has anything to do with your salvation. If you don't agree with anything, ignore it. You won't be saved if you believe it, and you won't be lost if you don't believe it.

'But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him.' (1 Corinthians 12:18). This verse plainly tells us that God has set the members in the body, so, none of us have the privilege of choosing the part we are to play in the

Body of Christ, because it is already chosen for us.

I had a friend who went to Bible School for three years, and well-meaning people kept asking him, "What are you going to do now? Are you going to become a Pastor? Or a Missionary? Or....?" It doesn't work like that. *'For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.'* (Romans 11:29). We were ordained to our Ministry before we became Christians. In fact, before Creation began, the Lord looked down through time to this day, and He saw a Ministry that was needed, and He saw a Brother, and He put the two together; and that Brother is fore-ordained to that Ministry. He saw another Ministry, and He saw a Sister, and He put those two together, so she is fore-ordained to her Ministry. He did that with each one of us.

If He wanted me to have someone else's Ministry, He would have given it to me. If He wanted someone else to have my Ministry, He would have given it to them, but He didn't. I cannot take someone else's place, and no-one else can take my place, because, *'the Lord set the members in the Body as it hath pleased Him.'* So, this gives us a warning. If no-one else can take my place, then I had better be diligent, and find my place, and fill it.

'But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.' (1 Corinthians 12:7). This verse tells us the Lord has given each one of us a Spiritual Ministry that will profit every other member of the Body of Christ. So, what everyone else is called to do will profit me; and what I am called to do will profit everyone else. We all need each other's Ministries. And, it doesn't matter how insignificant a part someone may feel they are playing, unless they are in their place, playing their part, the Body of Christ is not complete.

Imagine if you woke up one morning and, "What's this right arm?"

"Having the day off today?"

"You can't do that."

"Can't I? Just watch me."

So, you get dressed only using your left arm, and that isn't easy. Then you put your shoes on and....hello, you can't tie your laces with one hand. "Come on right arm, help me".

"Sorry, day off today, you'll have to wear your gumboots to the office."

That's what the Lord puts up with every single day. Someone doesn't want to play their part, and it not only affects that Ministry, but it affects the rest of the Body of Christ as well; because someone else has to bear their burdens for that day, or something doesn't get done that should have been done; and that creates a domino effect, because it affects other people, and other parts of God's plan. He needs us in our place every day of the week, not just on Sunday, because we don't realize how many people are affected by what we do, or don't do. And I don't think the Lord is impressed when we tell him to wear His gumboots today. Even things like our times of prayer and Bible reading may be just routines, but they are *important* routines. And, if

the Lord manages to accomplish as much as He does with the little that we give Him, imagine what He could accomplish if we were whole-hearted? He could turn this world upside-down. We will never know how much our little part of the Body of Christ plays in the bigger picture, until we step into Eternity.

The Gift or Talent we have, is what the Lord has placed within us to make the Worship leader attracted to music. It makes the Teacher attracted to information, and setting things in order. It makes the Pastor concerned for the welfare of others etc. But, our Calling or Ministry, is how that Gift is used in the Lord's service. We can use that gift ourselves, or the Lord can use it through us. As an example: if someone is Called to help bring unity in the Body of Christ: as a child they will continually be trying to bring unity in their home, they will try to bring unity in their classroom at school, and later on at their workplace. But, when the Lord calls them to their Ministry, they will use their Gift for what it was intended for, and help bring Unity to the Body of Christ.

And, if someone is fore-ordained to play a keyboard for Worship, you may ask them why they learned to play the keyboard in the first place. They will tell you their mother wanted them to learn it when they were six years old, so she enrolled them in lessons. That's what man sees, but no, the Lord wanted them to learn it, and their mother was following the leading of the Holy Spirit. That person could go on to become a concert pianist, and that would satisfy the musical interest the Lord has placed within them, but it would never satisfy the Calling they have. And even if they became the greatest concert pianist in the world, they would always feel that there's something else, there's something missing. And, until that Gift was used for what it was given for, there would always be something unfulfilled in their life.

A person can have one gift or talent, or they can have ten; it's whatever the Lord has chosen to use them for. The only thing He asks of us is, what He has ordained for us to do. Noah was a Prophet, and he spent one hundred and twenty years repeating the same message. "God is going to flood the earth and destroy everything that doesn't get into my boat." He didn't have to tell them something new every week. People made fun of Noah, "Here he comes, the old one-track-record, waters going to fall out of the sky, it's going to flood the earth, you have to get into my boat, or you're going to die." But Noah didn't have to apologize for what he said. And if the only thing you know is the Grace of God, then repeat it, and repeat it, and God will bless it.

A person's Ministry may last five years, or it may last fifty, depending on how old they are when the Lord calls them, and when their Personal Ministry begins. But, no matter how long a Ministry is, there is always a peak time of three to three and a half years, which is the time of their Calling into Service. It's like being in the Army. A soldier can be living at the Army base for years, but when a war is declared, they are called into active duty. And a Christian will look back fondly on that time, and think nothing else in their life compared with it.

No of course it didn't, because that was their time of calling into battle. That person

and their Ministry were at the forefront of the Lord's fight. And you find at that time, that those Talents that you tried so hard to use for the Lord, all fall into place, and they're used in His Service. And you realize that all the experiences you've had so far in your life, were preparing you for that time. And at that time, you're at the heart of the fight, in the heat of the battle, and it may not be some major win-or-lose-the-war place, it may just be out on the wing somewhere, but it's where the Lord is choosing to fight at that time. And when it's over the battle is raging on another front, but you will still carry on faithful in your place. You've played your part, and only the Lord knows how important that was in His grand scheme of things.

This three and a half years is characterized by an intensity of Anointing and fruit. The Ministry flourishes, and the person Ministering will know when it began. And, if it hasn't happened yet for you, you probably don't know it hasn't happened. James tells us that, *'Elijah prayed earnestly that it would not rain on the earth, and it did not rain for three years and six months.'* (James 5:17). His Ministry was contained within that time. The Lord Jesus was on earth for thirty-three years, but He had a Ministry of three and a half years. The two Prophets to Israel in Revelation 11 prophesy for one thousand two hundred and three score days, which is the three and a half years of their Ministries.

'And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.' (1 Corinthians 12:26). The things that each of us do affect every other member of the Body of Christ. If you are at home praying, I am blessed by it. If I sin, then you are harmed by that. We all suffer or rejoice by the things each of us do. Revelation 19:7 does not say, *'His wives have made themselves ready.'* It says, *'His wife.'* There is only One Body of Christ. So, if I am not ready for His Coming, then you are not ready. And, if you are not ready, then I am not ready. Because we're all in this together.

1.

The Missionary

Let's look at the Ministries themselves. Apostle means one sent forth, a messenger. Today we know them as Missionaries. Our Missionary friend is the Daniel Boone of the Christian family. He ventures forth into the Spiritual wilderness, where the Gospel Seed has never been sown, and he blazes a trail for the other Ministries to follow. It's like making a block of land into an orchard. You have to plant shelter belts, dig drains, put up fences, plant your trees or vines, and construct your buildings. You put in a lot of effort, and there may be nothing in return for years. James 5:7 tells us, *'The husbandman waits for the precious fruit of the earth, and has long patience for it.'* That

sums up our Missionary friend. He's the quiet achiever. He has long patience for the fruit of his Ministry. He has to have the patience of Job, and the wisdom of Solomon, because he's living where there's nothing but Spiritual darkness. There's a lot of prayer in his life. And he has to let his life be his pulpit, to convince the unbelievers surrounding him that the God he serves is the Living God. And when he has converts, he has to feed them Spiritually, and teach them how to live a life pleasing to the Lord. When there are enough converts, he will call in a Pastor, or ordain someone who has a calling on their life, and that Church is set in order as a unit. And, because the plight of the unsaved is what catches his attention, he cannot function there now, among the Believers. So, he will move on to another wilderness area, and begin all over again. So, our Missionary friend has an important place, and God bless the Missionaries.

Because our Missionary friend lives in Spiritual Egypt, there will be times when he has seven years of plenty, and sees a lot of souls come in. But he will also have to endure seven years of famine, when he will sow seed and nothing grows, sow seed again, and nothing grows. And more Missionaries lose their lives for the Gospel than all other Ministries put together.

Many people are afraid to drive outside their hometown. They like familiar roads, familiar intersections, etc. But our Missionary friend knows that these roads carry on over the horizon to other roads just like these. And his temperament allows him to be at ease on unfamiliar roads. So, because our Missionary friend is at ease going into unfamiliar, and even hostile situations, he will naturally take the keys, and slip into the driver's seat, when our friends hire the Campervan. And he will be the driver.

2.

The Pastor

Pastor means Shepherd. And Jesus said in John 10:27, *'My sheep hear My Voice.'* So, we are sheep and we need a Shepherd. Psalm 78:70-71 says, *'He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: from following the ewes great with young.'* That's what a Shepherd does. He is there when the lambs are born, he makes sure they have food, he protects them, he looks after them when they are sick, and he is there when they die.

That's what our Pastor friend does. He is there when new Converts come in, he feeds them Spiritually, he protects them from Satan and the World, he baptises them, marries them, and buries them. Our Pastor is the backbone of the Church, and the visible face of the Church to the World. His Ministry is defined as, *'A shoulder to cry on,'* because he is a burden bearer. Our Pastor friend has to be selfless, because he is

expected to be, a Teacher to his flock, a Doctor when they are sick, a Banker when they are financially troubled, a Counsellor when they are burdened, the AA when they have car trouble, a Foodbank to the hungry, the first port of call in an emergency, and the last line of defence in danger. And he is expected to be available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. That's a lot to ask of anyone, so, our Pastor friend has to be able to share part of his load with others, and that becomes their Ministry. Our Pastor friend usually gets all the blame for everything that goes wrong, and none of the credit for anything that goes right. And, if you want to lose favour with the Lord, speak against your Pastor. Always pray for your Pastor, and you will be blessed.

The most abused Ministry

Our Pastor friend has the most *used*, and the most *abused* Ministry in the Body of Christ. It's the most *abused* Ministry, because a man can become the Pastor of a Church when he's twenty-five, and he can still be the Pastor of that same Church when he's seventy-five. So, that makes it a career. And it also makes it attractive to those seeking a Career, whether they are Believers, or unbelievers. In 1969 a study was done in the Anglican Church in England, and it found that 65% of the Ministry either didn't believe there was a God, or they believed God was dead. The Lord is not going to Call anyone to represent Him if they do not believe He exists, so how did these unbelievers get into the Ministry? To them it was a career, just a good steady job. Because most people are going to get married in a Church, and most people are going to die sooner or later and have a funeral, so they'll never be out of a job. We don't see thousands of people over the world wanting to become Evangelists or Teachers without being Called to it, but they do become Pastors, and that makes it the most abused Ministry in the Body of Christ.

The most used Ministry

The Pastor also has the most *used* Ministry, because, if one of the other Ministries feel the Call of God on their life, but do not recognize what their particular Calling is, then they will become a Pastor.

Our Missionary friend can make a good Pastor, because that's part of his Calling anyway. But, because he has such a heart for the unsaved masses, he will often leave his flock, and make long Missionary journeys to remote places, to fulfil the Missionary

Calling within him.

Our Evangelist friend makes a terrible Pastor, because his Calling is to strike against sin. So, he will notice every little thing his flock do wrong. And he will hound them, and he will push them, and they will have no peace under him. He will spend his Ministry telling them they are backslidden, and need to repent. Because of that, his flock will fluctuate a lot, because we are not made to live under the ministry of an Evangelist. He is Called to sweep into town, hammer sin hard, and sweep out again. Our Evangelist friend could succeed, if he could soften things a bit. And as a Pastor, he would encourage his flock to do Outreach and Soul winning and they are always good things to do. So, Evangelists do not make good Pastors because they are too hard, and Pastors do not make good Evangelists because they are too soft.

Our Teacher friend as Pastor will tend to be dogmatic. But we need more than just the Word of God. We need the Spirit of God *on* the Word of God, and Faith *in* the Word of God to bring it to *life*. But, if our Teacher friend can overcome that, he could succeed as a Pastor.

Our Prophet friend is made to be in the Presence of God, not in the presence of men. And he has to work to the Lord's timetable, not mans. So, our Prophet friend would be an absentee Pastor a lot, while he is away, waiting on the Lord.

When our friends hire their Campervan, our Pastor friend will probably sit in the back. Because, he will be the last person to get in, after he has checked that the luggage has been stowed securely, and nothing has been left behind. Half an hour before meals he will be looking for somewhere to eat, and two hours before dark he will be looking for somewhere to park up for the night. He will be concerned for our friend's welfare, and creature comforts, because he not only thinks about his own needs, but he continually has the welfare of those around him on his heart.

Women Preachers

Many Brethren believe the lowest pit of Hell is reserved for Women Preachers. When some of them are away from home, and attend a different Fellowship, they will sing the songs with gusto, and Praise the Lord in Worship; but, when a woman steps up behind the Pulpit, they will gather up their family, and exit, as though the place was on fire. I personally don't feel that way. My feeling is that every other Christian must have had some experience I haven't had, or read something I haven't read, and they will say something to bless me, so I am ready to listen and learn.

Unfortunately, many 'churches' have been invaded by the ungodly world's standards, concerning the role of men and women in Ministry. But the Scriptures themselves, are

very clear on the subject of women Teaching, or Preaching.

1 Timothy 2:11-14,

11. *'Let the women learn in silence with all subjection.*

12. *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

13. *For Adam was first formed, then Eve.*

14. *And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.'*

And 1 Corinthians 14:34-35.

34. *'Let your women keep silence in the Churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.*

35. *And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church.'*

In verses 37-38, Paul shows that this was not only his personal view;

37. *'If any think himself to be a prophet, or Spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*

38. *But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant.'*

So, does this mean that a woman can never speak in a Church, or Church situation?

No, I don't believe it does. In 1 Corinthians 11:5, we read;

5. *'But every woman that prayeth or prophesyeth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven.'*

A woman can pray or prophesy in a Church, as verse 13 also echoes,

13. *'Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman Pray to God uncovered?'*
(Meaning with short hair).

Also, in a Missionary situation, or any situation indeed, where there is no man to teach, or preach, the Lord needs a member of His Body to work through, because He can't work in a vacuum. If a Sister steps into the void, and makes herself available to be used by the Lord, He will honour that, and work through her. And women can also Minister the Word to other Women.

The point most people miss in the subject of Women not Teaching or Preaching, is the reason *why* the Lord does not allow it. The Word of God tells us a woman is not to *'usurp authority over the man.'* (1 Timothy 2:12). To usurp means to take an authority which does not belong to you. There is a perfect purpose in everything the Lord does. Adam was created, in the image and likeness of God, for God. But Eve was 'made' in the image and likeness of Adam, as a 'helper fit,' for Adam. A man was made to serve

the Lord in Ministry. A woman serves the Lord, by serving her husband.

I have had some good friends who were Women Preachers. One attended a Congregation where the Minister died, and the man who was to take over either did not recognise that was his calling, or he did not have the guts to step up and fill it. As I said earlier, the Lord cannot work in a vacuum. He needs a member of His Body to work through, and He will use whoever makes themselves available for his use. So, this Sister stepped up into the Pulpit, and the Lord used her for three years, and blessed her Ministry, until a man was called to Minister there, and she stepped down.

I had another friend who was one of the main Preachers in a country Church. There was a large Fellowship who gathered there, and they berated me continually, for 'not allowing women to use the Gifts God had given to them.' I assured them, God had given everyone Spiritual Gifts, but Women Preachers weren't one of them.

I was to speak in that Church one Sunday, and on the Tuesday before, while I was working, I asked the Lord what He wanted me to speak on? He replied, "Why Paul wouldn't suffer a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over a man." I thought, "That's great, that will start World War Three." But I waited on Him, and prepared anyway. During the week I found out that all those who were against me would be away on the following weekend, so I felt good about it.

On the Sunday, I was at the door, welcoming everyone. There was a stained-glass window right across the front of the Church, and when cars arrived, I would see them, and welcome the occupants as they entered. Then, someone came around the side of the Church, but I hadn't noticed a car arrive. I thought, "That's strange!" The Sister who Preached, lived next to the Church, and it was her, who came around the corner, and into the Church. My heart fell. Inside I said, "Lord, if there is anyone in this whole district who I don't want here today, it's her!" He rebuked me saying, "If there's anyone in this whole district who should be here today, it's her." When He said that, I knew this was all according to His Will, so I confidently stepped up to the Pulpit.

When I announced what I was going to speak on, she didn't get up and leave. She was gracious enough to hear me out. I explained what the Lord's desire was, when He was alone in Eternity, and, how that desire was to be fulfilled through His Divine Plan. I explained why Eve couldn't be created on the sixth day, along with Adam, and why she had to be 'made' after creation was finished, to bring His Plan to pass. I also explained why, Eve was deceived into believing the Serpent's word, over the Lord's Word; when Adam wasn't. Then, I explained the events down to, and including, Calvary, and the bruising of the Serpent's head.

When I was finished, I closed the Meeting, and she got up from her pew, and came walking straight towards me. I was apprehensive, thinking, 'this is going to be a shouting match.' But when she opened her mouth, she was a different person. She spoke very humbly, and very softly. She said, "I never saw it like that before." And, for the next few years that I resided there, she never Preached, and she became one of

my staunchest supporters. A lot can be said for 'speaking the truth in love.'

I also attended Bible studies with a Pastor's wife, among others. She would read 1 Corinthians 14, down to verse 33, and then skip over to verse 36 and down, as if the verses in between didn't exist, because to her they didn't. But, unfortunately, Pastor's wife or not, she had a wrong spirit.

3.

The Teacher

Our Teacher friend is a very analytical person. That means that he likes to break things down to their component parts, to understand how and why they work. So, the best thing about having a birthday for our Teacher friend is, that he has a new toy to dismantle, to see what makes it tick. The worst thing, of course, is that, once he's fiddled with it, it will never tick again. But that's what our Teacher friend is like, he likes to understand things. So, he leans toward gathering information. And, things like dictionaries, charts, maps, encyclopaedias, interest him. Things that contain readily accessible information.

In Sunday School Miss Jones asks the class, "Why did Joseph go to live in Egypt when he was a boy?" Little Johnny's hand shoots up.

"Because his brothers were jealous of him, and they sold him to get rid of him." "Good boy Johnny." She says, and he gets a sticker to put in his book. Little Johnny's very proud of himself, and so he should be.

But we also have a young Teacher friend growing up in that class too. And he thinks, "Yes, that's true. But the Lord also sent Joseph there to store up food for the seven years of famine, so Abraham's descendants would survive it. And he also went there because he was a Type of Jesus Christ, and he had to live out certain events in his life, to reveal Jesus Christ to that generation."

No-one else in the class is thinking those things, because to them they are all isolated incidents. But our budding Teacher friend sees the way every page in the Bible inter-relates with every other page. He sees the threads running through them all, beginning in Genesis, and ending in Revelation.

And, when our friends hire their Campervan, our Teacher friend will sit in the passenger seat in the front. He opens the glove-box, and takes out the road map, and, it will either be on his lap, or within his reach, the whole trip; because he will be the Navigator.

And, as our friends are travelling through Western Australia, they come around a corner, and there's a little town in front of them. Someone says, "Woah look!" And it surprises them, as if it's just sprouted up out of the desert. But it doesn't surprise our

Teacher friend, because he isn't just watching each day's events unfold before them as they travel. No. He studies the road map every morning, before they leave. So, he already knows what towns they will come to that day, and in what order. Nothing surprises him, because each days travel just fulfils what the road map has already shown him.

And, that's how our Teacher friend looks at the Bible. He studies it, and he sees that event A is foretold to happen, then event B, then event C. The first one happened fifteen years ago, and the second began to happen four years ago. So now, he is looking for event C to take place. And his place is to teach the rest of the Body of Christ, so we will be prepared for what the Lord has already foretold will happen. So, nothing will take us by surprise, if our Teacher friend is fulfilling his Ministry. But our Teacher friend does not normally have his own pulpit, so he needs the co-operation of a Pastor, to give him a place to speak. And God bless the Teachers, we need our Teacher friends. Our Teacher friend's Ministry is described in Nehemiah 8:8. 'So they read in the book in the Law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the meaning.'

4.

The Evangelist

Our Evangelist friends are the smash-and-grab boys of the Christian family. The Evangelist will sweep into town, whack sin with a sledgehammer, then sweep out; and you may never see him again, because he is a Sower, he sows the Word of God.

When a Farmer wants to grow a crop, he discs up a paddock, then someone comes in with a seed drill, to plant the seed. Does he stay to water it? No. That's not his calling. Does he stay to weed it? No. That's not his calling either. In the parable of the Sower, Jesus said, '*A Sower went forth to..*' To do what? '*to sow some seed.*' That's his calling. Is it important? The whole future crop lies in those seeds. If there are no seeds sown, there will be no harvest. So, God bless our Evangelist friend's.

Our Evangelist friends are bare knuckle fighters, they stand with the Bible and nothing else, and they see everything as black or white, there are no grey areas. You are either a sinner, or you are a Saint.

Whereas our Missionary friend goes deep into the world of the unsaved, our Evangelist friend hovers on the periphery of the Church. He calls the unsaved, and he calls the backslidden, and his message is, "Repent or perish!". There is no compromise, because there are no alternatives. Every person on earth will do one or the other, they will repent, or they will perish.

When the Prophet Samuel was sent to anoint one of Jesse's sons to be King over

Israel, Eliab the eldest came before him. He was a tall strong guy, and Samuel thought, *“Surely the Lord’s anointed is before me?”* But, the Lord said, *“Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”* (1 Samuel 16:7).

That is the basic difference between the Evangelist and the Pastor. Our Evangelist friend looks on the outward appearance. To him, what you see is what you get. If he sees you do something wrong, then you are a sinner, and you need to repent. But our Pastor friend looks on the heart. If he sees you do the same thing, he will want to know *why* you are doing it, so he can help you. Often, it’s not what we do that’s right or wrong; but *why* we do it, is what makes it right or wrong for us personally. But you will never convince our Evangelist friend of that. To him, black is black, and white is white, and never the twain shall meet. But, that’s the type of temperament it takes for our Evangelist friend’s Ministry. Someone who can cleanly separate sin from righteousness.

The Bible wasn’t written for the Lord, nor for Angels, but for us. And the Lord expects us to read it to grow Spiritually. Hosea 4: 6 says, *‘My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.’* Because our Evangelist friend sweeps into town, then sweeps out again, and he’s gone; he needs the co-operation of Pastors and Teachers to feed his converts if his Ministry is to succeed. All Ministries are in this together. So, God bless the Evangelists, we need our Evangelist friends.

On our road trip, our Evangelist friend will sit in the back. Because, he will be the back seat driver. He will make sure the driver, and every other driver on the road, obey all the road rules. And, when someone yells, “Hey, that driver was supposed to give way to you!” That’s our Evangelist friend, doing his thing, over in the back seat.

5. The Prophet

Our Prophet friend is not so much concerned with what the Lord said 6000 years ago, in the book of Genesis, or 2000 years ago in the book of Revelation, but the Word of the Lord comes to the Prophet *today*. 1 Samuel 9:9 tells us, *‘He that is now called a Prophet, was before time called a Seer.’* Or See-er, because he saw visions. So, our Prophet friend’s Ministry is not like the Missionary, and Evangelist, who labour among the unsaved, and it’s not like the Pastor, and Teacher, who labour among the saved, but he goes into the Presence of God alone and waits, until the Lord speaks, or shows him a vision. And his Ministry is to wait and hear, then tell the rest of the Body of Christ

what the Lord wants them to know.

Now when our friends stop for the night in their campervan, our Prophet friend goes off alone, so the others see him as a loner. Does he enjoy being alone? No, not necessarily. But he has a little radio and an earphone, and he goes somewhere quiet to listen to it. Can he see who is speaking? No, but he can hear their voice. Can the others hear it? No. Only the Prophet has the earphone. So, what is he listening to?

Well, the written word on the roadmap reveals the unchangeable things, such as cities, towns, roads, rivers etc. The geography. But our Prophet friend is listening to the changeable things. The things that are relevant to today only, not to any other day, such as the weather. You can't print the weather on the roadmap, because it changes every day. So, he doesn't want to know what yesterday's weather was like, or last weeks, because that won't affect them. He wants to know what today's weather will be like, because only that will affect them today.

So, now that our Prophet friend is hearing something new just for today, they don't need that old roadmap any longer, do they? Yes, they do. They need the written word, and the spoken word, because the spoken word he is hearing, sheds more-light on the written word, and brings it to life for today. And that's what our Prophet friend does in his Ministry. Our road map (the Bible), reveals the unchangeable things, such as God's Promises, and God's Will. But our Prophet friend wants to know what Jesus Christ is specifically doing on earth *today*, and only the Lord can reveal that to him. So, God bless the Prophets, because we need to know what the Lord wants to say to us today.

What would it be like if each of these Ministries made the trip to Perth alone?

Our Missionary friend would go on a tour bus. He would sit beside a perfect stranger and introduce himself, and in ten minutes they would be old friends. The trip would take three weeks, and he would get to know everyone on the bus. He would get their names and addresses, and keep in contact with them for the rest of his life. The thing he will most remember about the trip is the people he shared it with.

If our Pastor friend was making the trip alone, he would hire a station-wagon, or a van. He would pick up every hitch-hiker along the way, and feed them as they travelled. He would spend quarter of the trip towing broken-down cars to garages, and towing cars out of gas to the next gas station. He would assist at every accident he comes across, helping the victims, contacting relatives, and controlling the traffic. He will forget the names of the people he meets, and he did not get their addresses, but the thing he will most remember about the trip will be those people he could help.

If the Teacher was making the trip alone, he would spend six months planning it, and three months taking it. When most people see two places on a map, they see a straight line between them, and they try to travel that direct route. But when our Teacher friend looks at it, he sees that there are as many ways to travel, as there are roads on the map, because he sees the way all these roads are interconnected. So, our Teacher

friend cannot just do a road trip. He can see so many possibilities, that every trip has to be a safari, because he will want to visit every museum on the way, and see every sight, and walk every track, and climb to every lookout. He will zigzag and criss-cross, and backtrack, and do four times as many kilometres as anyone else. And every time he stops, he will have a sandwich in one hand, and a map in the other. The thing he will most remember about the trip is a little hill he saw that interested him in New South Wales. It was covered in boulders and scrub, and he likes boulders and scrub. It passed by on his right-hand side, but he didn't see a road leading to it. As it fell behind, he kept telling himself that he would turn around somewhere and go back, but he didn't. And that hill will haunt him for the rest of his life.

If our Evangelist friend was making the trip alone, he would do the journey in a third of the time anyone else takes. He would concentrate on the road, and see few of the sights, but he would be pleased, because he made the trip much quicker than any of the tour guides said it would take. And he will buy his wife a souvenir at the duty-free shop, while he waits for the plane home.

If the Prophet was travelling alone, he wouldn't go the scenic route the Missionary went. He wouldn't go the historical route the Teacher went. He wouldn't go the fastest route the Evangelist went. And he wouldn't go the most populated route the Pastor went. He would go the solitary route. Through quiet and out of the way places. And the thing he will most remember, will be a night when he camped on the plains, and the stars were so clear above, he could almost count them with his eyes closed.

6.

We're all in this together

The Pastor holds the Ministries together. And he has to allow the Teacher to share his pulpit, so the Teacher can play his part. He has to invite the Evangelist. He has to allow the Prophet to use his pulpit. And these Ministries all have to support the Missionary financially, so he can fulfil his part. And the congregation must sit under these Ministries, to be perfected by what the Lord does through them.

Another reason why we have to accept these Ministries is because, when the Lord gives a Message to the Church through a Prophet, or one of the others, He doesn't expect to have to re-invent the wheel for every Believer, and give each one of them that same message personally. He expects us to be in contact with His Ministries, to receive what He gives through them. And as long as there are lost Souls to be saved, we need Missionaries and Evangelists. As long as people are being saved, we need Pastors and Teachers. And until we are living in the Millennium with walk in access to

the Throne of God, we need Prophets, for the Word of the Lord to come to.

Besides the five-fold Ministry, there are thousands of others, and we all feel the effects of them, without knowing they are being fulfilled. But what is the most important Ministry, if there is a most important one? Is it the Evangelist who may have hundreds of converts at one time? Or the Prophet who goes into the Presence of God alone? No, it's none of these. It's Prayer. Prayer keeps these other Ministries going. Prayer protects them. Prayer helps them to succeed. And if a God-given Ministry fails, it is seldom from a lack of enthusiasm, or effort. But more likely, it is from a lack of prayer.

In Eternity, we will find out that our Prayers achieved more than everything else we ever did in our lifetimes. So, if you ever want to do something for the Lord, and you don't know what to do, why not pray? Because we can never pray too much.

How can you know what your personal calling is? There are three ways to know God's Will for your life.

Firstly – The Lord will reveal it to you personally, and He will call you to it. Not your husband, your wife, or your best friend.

Secondly – It will be Scriptural. The Lord can do things that *aren't* written in the Scriptures, but He will never do anything *contrary* to them.

Thirdly – Circumstances in your life will allow it to happen. If an eighty-year-old says they always wanted to be a Missionary, but they never had the money to do it, and they could never get the time off work for it, then they weren't called to it, or circumstances in their life would have allowed it to happen.

With each of us, our temperament causes us to be attracted to certain things, and to lean in certain directions. So, even if we do not consciously know what our calling is, we will naturally do it anyway, because that's the direction our Temperament takes us. As an example of this, when Noah was a boy, his mother came home from the mall, and Noah put the cartons the groceries were in, in a line on the floor. He put the cat in one. He put the dog in one. He got the budgie cage down, and put that in one. And he climbed into one himself. His father was sitting at the table having a cup of coffee and watching Noah, and he asked, "What are you doing now Noah?" Noah was really proud of himself, and he exclaimed, "Daddy, I built a big boat!" His father said, "Well...don't! Why don't you pretend you're milking the cows, or doing something useful, instead of always pretending you're building big boats?" Because Noah wasn't born to milk cows, he was born to build a boat for the '*saving of his house*,' as the Bible tells us. He was doing it when he was young, and he did it when he was old.

Another example is Moses. When he was forty years old, he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, so he killed the Egyptian. Why did he do that? Because as Acts 7:25 tells us, '*For he supposed that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them.*' This was forty years before his burning bush experience, and forty

years before the Lord called him to his Ministry, but he was already trying to fulfil it.

Colossians 4:17 says to Archippus, *'Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.'* This is a warning to each one of us also, because our Spiritual Ministry is the most important thing we will ever do in our life. And if one of us is not in our place, fulfilling our Ministry, then the Body of Christ is not complete. So, serve Him with all your heart, and may He richly bless the Ministry He has given you.

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Ed.D.